

Message Text

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73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAJ-01

OMB-01 NIC-01 /070 W

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R 141432Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5105

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

UNCLAS VIENNA 2239

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINS, PO, AU

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO PORTUGUESE COUP

REF: LISBON 1381

1. NEWS REPORTS OF ATTEMPTED COUP IN PORTUGAL WERE HEADLINED IN ALL AUSTRIAN PAPERS ON MARCH 12 AND 13 BUT EVENTS PROVOKED ALMOST NO EDITORIAL COMMENT. HEADLINES GENERALLY CHARACTERIZED COUP AS RESULT OF SPLIT AMONG MILITARY LEADERS AND REACTION IN PORTUGAL AS EXCESSIVE (E.G., WITCH-HUNT AFTER "FASCISTS").

2. INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE "KURIER" COLUMNIST SAID THAT, EXCEPT FOR FACT SPINOLA FLED, IT STRETCHED ONE'S CREDULITY TO BELIEVE GENERAL INVOLVED IN COMIC OPERATION INVOLVING "FEW SOLDIERS AND TWO OVER-AGE PROP-PLANES THAT BOMBED SINGLE KASSERNE". WHATEVER CASE, HE CONTINUED, COMMUNISTS HAVE RUSHED IN AS "GUARDIANS OF DEMOCRACY" TO GET MORE POWER. COLUMNIST WELCOMED FACT THAT APRIL 12 VOTE NOT POSTPONED, BUT ASKED RHETORICALLY WHAT IT WAS WORTH NOW THAT FAIR CHOICE AMONG BROAD SPECTRUM OF POLITICAL IDEAS IS GONE.

3. CONSERVATIVE "DIE PRESSE" CORRESPONDENT CONCURRED

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WITH REPORT FROM MADRID HEADLINED "ELECTION IN PORTUGAL

WILL BE MEANINGLESS".

4. INDEPENDENT LEFT-LEANING "KRONEN ZEITUNG" COLUMNIST
WROTE THAT "COUP ATTEMPT HAS HELPED COMMUNIST INTERESTS
IN PORTUGAL", REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY LEADERS WILL HAVE A DIFFICULT
TIME MAKING "NORMAL" DEMOCRACY OUT OF PORTUGAL, HE
CONCLUDED, BUT "CHANCE FOR A SOCIALISTIC PORTUGAL, IN
WHICH LIBERTY AGAIN IS ONLY A RELATIVE CONCEPT, STILL
EXISTS".

5. PRESS REPORTED ON MARCH 14 THAT LEFTIST AUSTRIAN
"CHILE SOLIDARITY FRONT" HAS ASKED AUSTRIAN POLITICAL
LEADERS TO DO WHAT THEY CAN TO PREVENT RESTORATION OF
OLD PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT SYSTEM AFTER CHILEAN PATTERN.
FRONT CHARGED THAT SAME ELEMENTS THAT OVERTHREW ALLENDE
WERE PLOTTING AGAINST YOUNG PORTUGUESE DEMOCRACY. MOWINCKEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PRESS SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975VIENNA02239
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750090-0873
From: VIENNA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750348/aaaabqri.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LISBON 1381
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolfhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2003 by BalzMJ>; APPROVED <05 JAN 2004 by woolfhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS REACTION TO PORTUGUESE COUP
TAGS: PINS, PO, AU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006